CATALA ISLAND MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

March 2003

Approved by:

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Date:

105-01451/

CATALA ISLAND MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK
Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Catala Island Marine Park is to protect special natural features. The park is unusual in its topographic location and its ecosystems. It encompasses numerous reefs, islets, sea caves, and marine ecosystems. The surrounding marine waters are teeming with life, with kelp beds, salmon, groundfish, herring spawn, crabs, geoducks, mussels, sea urchins, goose barnacles, ducks, shorebirds, and the threatened sea otter. Catala Island itself is forested with mature trees, twisted and stunted from the wind, and contains sandy beaches and a lake. As well, the park protects a unique spit and bog complex.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role is to provide a marine recreation opportunity in a wilderness setting. The park incorporates Catala Island and Twin Islands, set in Esperanza Inlet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. It is a popular destination for sea kayaking, boating, fishing, and nature appreciation with its reefs, lakes, bogs, and rugged shoreline to explore. The island has no facilities, but wilderness camping is possible with informal campsites, and there are rustic trails that lead to the lake and bog in the centre of the island. The park has an anchorage that is good in calm weather, and there is a nearby anchorage at Queen Cove on Vancouver Island that is better suited for inclement weather conditions. The recreational opportunities available in Catala Island Marine Park are complemented by nearby Nuchatlitz Park.

Tertiary Role
The **tertiary** role is to protect and preserve significant cultural heritage features. Nootka Sound has a colourful history with First Nations heritage and European exploration and settlement. The park is rich in First Nations archaeological sites as native people have occupied Nootka Sound for at least 4,000 years, enjoying the bountiful natural resources during the summer months. Visitors can capture glimpses of the past and gain an understanding and appreciation of First Nation history and culture.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of natural and cultural values	➢ Conduct an ecological inventory including the marine components and wetlands. ➢ Undertake a cultural inventory and traditional use study in conjunction with First Nations.
Impact of commercial harvesting and recreation use on natural and cultural values	➢ Work with DFO to ensure harvesting does not interfere with protection of marine species, especially sea otters. ➢ Assess capacity of ecotourism and recreation use levels. ➢ Increase awareness around acceptable uses in the park.
Lack of awareness of the park	➢ Install interpretive sign with park map at departure points (Zeballos, Tahsis and

	Gold River). ➢ Ensure boundaries are on marine charts. ➢ Develop information on the Nootka Sound area focused on cultural and natural values and appropriate behaviours.
First Nation relations	➢ Develop good working relationships with First Nations to develop an understanding and appreciation of protected area status and park values.

Zoning

Natural Environment Zone – covers the entire park (850.7 hectares) in recognition of the natural and recreational values. The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Catala Island Marine Park makes a minimal contribution of 0.13% to the overall representation of the Windward Island Mountains Ecosection (WIM), which is well represented in the protected areas system at 17.4%. With 596 hectares of foreshore, it contributes minimally (0.68%) to the representation of the Vancouver Island Shelf *Marine* Ecosection (VIS), which is under protected provincially at 5.4%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Catala island Marine Park makes a minimal contribution of 0.29% to the representation of CWHvh1, which is well represented in the protected areas system at 19.3%.
Special Features	☒	Diverse upland and marine ecosystems, bald eagle nests (5), freshwater lake, wetland, brackish pond, spit, bogs, reefs, sea caves, sea otter habitat
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Provincially red-listed and nationally threatened sea otter. COSEWIC-listed threatened northern abalone.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☐	None known at this time

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☒	Remote marine experience
destination	☒	Remote moorage and kayak destination
travel corridor	☒	Sea kayaking route with guided tours
local recreation	☐	Low level of use
Special Opportunities	☒	Potential as part of ecotourism focus with commercial operators
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	First Nation culture, part of regional history of Esperanza Inlet and Nootka Sound, natural values including sea otters

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values unknown
Special Feature	☒	First Nation gathering place, burial caves, archaeological sites

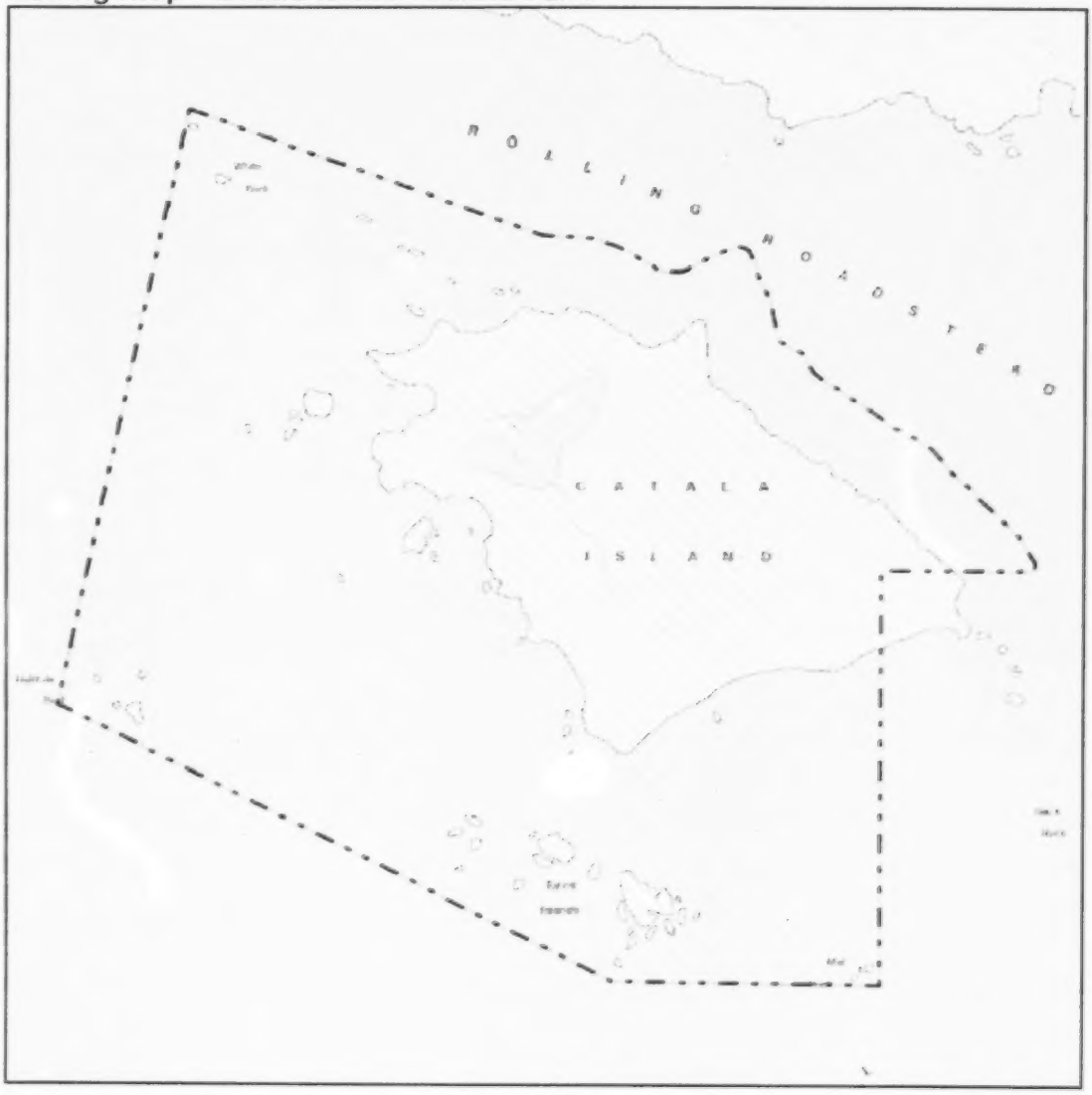
Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of marine protected areas on the west coast of Vancouver Island
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not applicable
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	The natural and cultural values are vulnerable to recreational impacts, oil spills, and commercial harvesting
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Marine Protected Areas Strategy; the park was created as a result of recommendations made in the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan

Area: 850.7 hectares (254.7 ha upland; 596 ha foreshore)

Date of establishment: July 12, 1995

Zoning Map - Catala Island Marine Park



Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Natural Environment
Protected Area Boundary

0 1
km

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